



THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY

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Libertarian Party endorses NAFTA; calls for world-wide free trade

The most aggressively pro-free trade group in America has endorsed NAFTA.

The Libertarian Party has reaffirmed its steadfast support of free trade with a formal endorsement of the North American Free Trade Agreement, and urged that NAFTA be expanded into full free trade with the entire world.

By a 12-1 vote, the party's National Committee voted to encourage ratification of NAFTA by the U.S. Congress, despite some concerns. Overall, the party asserted that the controversial proposal would do more good than harm.

"Protectionists claim that the creation of a free-trade area will reduce American prosperity. That's simply not true!" said Williamson Evers, the National Committee member who drafted the resolution. "The fact is, prosperity grows with the expansion of the market. It's trade protection that blocks prosperity and grants special favors to privileged industries and labor unions — at the expense of the rest of America."

Evers said NAFTA will reduce to zero tariffs on imports to the United States from Canada and Mexico, and noted that the National Platform of the Libertarian Party calls for the abolition of all tariffs. But Evers said the Libertarian Party doesn't want free trade to stop at the borders of Canada and Mexico.

"We oppose all efforts to turn North America into an exclusionary trading bloc. The party will try to expand the trade liberalization achieved through NAFTA into full free trade with the entire world," he promised.

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Besides ideology, Evers said the party also had political reasons for endorsing the bill.

“The defeat of NAFTA in Congress will set back the cause of free trade for decades, because American politicians would decide free trade is a lost cause and not worth their support,” he said. “We can’t have that happen.”

But the party does have some concerns about the scope of NAFTA, said Evers.

“The Libertarian Party has always opposed international treaties that violate individual rights. So we will oppose any efforts to turn NAFTA into a vehicle for political and bureaucratic interference with property rights and manipulation of business firms, especially through continental regulations of working conditions or environmental policies,” he said.

The Libertarian Party is the third largest political party in America. Its platform calls for free enterprise, free trade, individual liberty, respect for the Bill of Rights, and no meddling overseas. Libertarian candidates for state and federal office won more than 3.7 million votes in 1992, and there are approximately 100 Libertarians in elected and appointed office across the country.

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